

From the Pastor—April 29, 2018

Grell On Gospel Jesus focuses us upon the relationship he has with his Father in this Sunday's Gospel. The Father is the vine grower, while Jesus is the vine. Jesus points all attention to his Father, saying it glorifies the Father when we bear fruit and become Jesus' disciples. When moments, or longer periods of life, seem to you that you are not bearing much fruit, read this Gospel. Examine yourself if you are remaining in Jesus. Ask yourself if you follow the Lord's words, "Without me, you can do nothing." It is a difficult self-examination, one that you may want to bring to your confessor in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Seeing Nuncio in Seward! After I made a protracted encouragement last weekend for all to attend the blessing of the new wing of the seminary in Seward, I was prepared to go myself. But I became quite tired on Sunday afternoon, and was able to attend only the Evening Prayer and the banquet held for priests. Still, I was very glad for this time to be together with benefactors of the seminary and brother priests. We had a beautiful time of prayer in the Immaculate Conception Chapel. We sang all the parts of Evening Prayer (also called "Vespers"), and the Apostolic Nuncio gave a great homily. His Excellency, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, spoke on the Blessed Virgin Mary being a model for us as priests and seminarians with her Magnificat which she spoke to her cousin Elizabeth at her Visitation (the second Joyful Mystery). The archbishop's points were also based upon the thought of Saint John Paul II from a document that he wrote, called in Latin "Pastores dabo vobis," which means "I will give them shepherds." After the prayer in the chapel, the banquet was of the sort where we had toasts given to the pope, the bishops present, the seminarians, and to the Church. Bishop Bruskewitz was what you might call the keynote speaker, as he explained these past 20 years of the history of St. Gregory the Great. His Excellency gave tribute to Divine Providence for the obtaining of land and physical plant for our seminary, and for placing upon the bishop's heart a strong conviction that our diocese needed a seminary. Later, the current rector (head) of the seminary spoke, the Very Reverend Father Jeffrey Eickhoff. Father Eickhoff spoke of how some 370 men from a total of 13 dioceses have studied at St. Gregory's. Not all of them have been called to the priesthood, but about 70 of them have been. Some of the alumni of the seminary who have discerned a calling to Holy Matrimony were present, and their living of their Christian faith was extolled and celebrated. The first two priests to graduate from St. Gregory's, Fathers Sean Timmerman and Joe Bernardo, gave short talks of their memories of the early days. I sat at the banquet with good priest-friends, including Father Doty (one of my predecessors here) and Father Sullivan (who grew up nearby at Doniphan). *** If any of you attended the seminary blessing and didn't see me, I am glad that you went and I hope all of you reading this find an opportunity someday soon to see this beautiful place where our future priests are formed.

Rosary Commitment I want to thank ushers and congregants for their patience last weekend as the Rosary commitment was held during the end of my homily. Having done commitments like this in the past, I know the

best way is to have a time of quiet after the priest's instructions. These quiet moments during the Mass are most always for the priorities given me, either directly or indirectly, by our Bishop. Giving all of us a chance to commit to the Rosary reinforces the Venerable Father Patrick Peyton's saying, "The family that prays together, stays together." If you did not fill out a Rosary commitment card last weekend, it is not too late. They are postcard-size and blue in color. Please drop it in the collection.

Charity and Stewardship Appeal Our goal for the whole Diocese is \$2.1 million for this year's Charity and Stewardship Appeal. For you who may be new to our Diocese, this appeal represents our "bread and butter" for many ministries that we want to support but may not have the awareness to contribute toward. Ministries approved by Bishop Conley are the recipients of our contributions. We can support the categories of "Proclaiming God's Word," which includes ministries such as the Family Life Office and Youth Ministry; "Works of Mercy" such as the diocese's ministry to prisons, hospitals and nursing homes; and "Diocesan Ministries" such as the diocesan tribunal and religious sisters' retirement. Our parish goals are:

\$1,550.00 – St. Joseph

\$8,360.00 – St. Mary

I am pleased to have serving as committee chairs for this year's appeal in St. Mary's Parish, Mr. Dan Meier and Mr. and Mrs. Brian and Alison Morrow; and in St. Joseph's Parish, Mr. and Mrs. Ron and Cindy Consbruck.

A Pilgrimage with Yours Truly! A couple of weeks ago, I received a phone call from Spirit Catholic Radio. I am a big devotee of our local Catholic radio network and of all other Catholic radio stations, which number over 300 nationwide. Matt Willkom was calling to ask me to make an appearance on the Good Book Club o Spirit Mornings (see below). But then he asked me another question: would I be willing to serve as chaplain to a pilgrimage which Spirit Catholic Radio was sponsoring? He gave me some time to think about it. I decided to say "yes!" So, I want to give you all a chance to consider joining me on Spirit Radio's "Shrines of the North", a one-of-a-kind pilgrimage to breathtaking sites across the north in Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota. You can go to spiritcatholicradio.com/shrinesofthenorth/ to learn more details of the itinerary. For now, note that the date of this pilgrimage is August 1-5, 2018. I am looking forward to being the spiritual advisor and recipient of the fruits and graces of this pilgrimage. It is rather short in duration as far being only five days long, but that may be appealing for those unable to commit to long pilgrimages to further-away places. Our path will take us to a number of beautiful, prayerful, and historic sites in the northern lands of the "Lower 48" of our United States.

My Audio from Spirit Radio My appearance on the radio has a rather long web address...sorry about that...but I am posting it on my personal facebook page. Here is where you can access it on the internet. This is from April 19, Thursday a week ago: <https://soundcloud.com/user-24081127/04-19-18-good-book-club-zechariah-ch-8-1-17-fr-loras-grell?in=user-24081127/sets/spirit-mornings-week-of-04-16>.

God Bless You!

Father Grell